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## Introduction to the Program

### What is *Advanced Skills for School Success*?

**Advanced Skills for School Success** is a study skills program consisting of six separate modules:

**Module 1** School Behaviors and Organization Skills

**Module 2** Completing Daily Assignments

**Module 3** Effective Reading of Textbooks

**Module 4** Learning from Verbal Presentations and Participating in Discussions

**Module 5** Writing Reports

**Module 6** Preparing for and Taking Tests

### For whom is *Advanced Skills for School Success* designed?

**Advanced Skills for School Success** is primarily designed for students in junior and middle secondary school who have not completed **Skills for School Success** at primary school. **Advanced Skills for School Success** can also be used to review and expand the skills of secondary school students who have already been taught organization and study skills in the primary year levels but have not yet mastered these skills. This program has generally been taught as part of the regular instructional program at the middle school or junior secondary school level. However, it has also been used in remedial, special education, and tutorial settings with students experiencing academic challenges.

### What is the content of *School Behaviors and Organization Skills*?

This module introduces school behaviors that should be exhibited before class and during class, and provides guidelines for completing homework. In addition, the module introduces students to important organization skills. Students are taught to use a folder to organize classroom materials and to keep a monthly calendar as an aid in time management.

### Why is this content important to students?

In order for students to benefit from classroom teaching, they must exhibit certain school behaviors. They must exhibit appropriate school behaviors *before class* (e.g. be prepared, bring materials, arrive on time, enter quietly, get ready for class), *during class* (e.g. follow classroom rules, listen carefully, participate in class activities, and ask for help when needed), and *after class* (e.g. take home necessary materials, complete assignments, bring assignments to class). If students exhibit their behaviors, you will have a better working environment, and students will have a more successful learning environment.

Appropriate school behaviors are best established by explicit instruction during the initial weeks of school. In this module, students will be taught what they are expected to do before, during, and after each of their classes. Once expectations are communicated, teachers will need to conduct their classes accordingly. For example, if teachers expect students to arrive on time for each class, they should greet the students at the door, close the door when the bell rings, and immediately begin teaching. These actions tell students that the school behaviors are not optional. Teachers should also give students feedback on their performance and continually review the classroom expectations.

Along with following appropriate school behaviors, students must also be able to manage their materials. To facilitate this, students are taught how to organize and utilize a three-ring folder. Knowing how to make full use of a folder helps students locate and retrieve class materials, organize materials for study, and transport materials to and from class. Teachers benefit from better-organized and better-prepared students and a reduction in class time spent on locating paper, pencils, and homework. Parents also benefit because the folder can serve as a communication tool between home and school. Parents can examine in-progress and completed work to gain a better idea of what their child is learning.

Time-management skills are also critical to school success. In this module, students are taught to record all assignments on a monthly academic calendar and to consult the calendar and plan ahead to ensure completion of more demanding assignments. As with the folder, the use of an academic calendar has proven beneficial not only to students and teachers, but also to parents. Parents can examine the calendar entries and better support their child in the timely completion of homework. Not surprisingly, the combined use of the folder and calendar has been shown to increase the percentage of homework assignments completed and handed in on time. In addition, students are learning skills that they will carry into their adult life. Time management is as important in the workplace as it is at school.

### When should *School Behaviors and Organization Skills* be taught?

This module should be introduced on the first day of school and taught during the initial weeks of school. The first weeks of school are the critical time for establishing school behaviors and organization skills, behaviors that will be used throughout the school year. Research on behavior management emphasizes the importance of establishing clear teacher expectations at the beginning of the school year.

# Lesson 1

## Before-Class Guidelines

**Lesson Objective:** Students will learn school behaviors that should be exhibited before class. They will also learn why these school behaviors are important to their teachers, to their classmates, and to themselves.

### Teacher preparation:

- On the board, list the materials needed for your class.
- Duplicate a copy of Reproducible A for each student's folder. Students will need a copy for each class they attend.
- Duplicate a copy of Reproducible B, Parent Letter, for each student. Or compose your own letter, using Reproducible B as a model.

### Student materials:

- Student Book pages 2 and 3
- Lined paper
- Reproducible A, page 35 (Teacher Guide)
- Reproducible B, Parent Letter, page 36 (Teacher Guide)

**Note to the teacher:** In order for you to teach and for your students to learn, your students need to exhibit certain behaviors before each class begins. During the lesson, stress why before-class behaviors are important to the student, to his or her classmates, and to the teacher.

### General Teaching Procedure

(NOTE: At the beginning of the lesson, assign each student a partner. Within each pair of partners, assign one student the number 1 and the other student the number 2. On the board, list the materials that will be needed in class.)

1. Students open to page 2 and read the title. Then they find part A and read the introductory paragraph.
2. Students read the first guideline. Talk about how they can prepare for class. Discuss the importance of class preparation.
3. Students read the second guideline and copy the list of materials from the board.
4. Ask students why the second school behavior is important to the teacher, to other students, and to them.
5. Students read and discuss the importance of the remaining guidelines.
6. Review the five guidelines. Have partners take turns telling each other the **Before-Class Guidelines**.
7. Students locate part B and complete questions 1–6. Students may work with their partner. Provide feedback on their answers.
8. (Optional) Students close their book and write the five before-class guidelines. Then they compare their list with their partner's list

9. Distribute multiple copies of Reproducible A. Tell students that they will need a copy for each class they attend. Ask them to fill out the form for each class and keep all the forms in their folder. Later, students will place each form behind the appropriate divider in their folder. Ask the other teachers to assist students in completing the forms.
10. Distribute Reproducible B, Parent Letter.

### Answer Key for Lesson 1

- A.
1. No written responses
  2. (List of materials written on board)
  3. No written responses
  4. No written responses
  5. No written responses
- B. Answers may vary.

### Scripted Teaching Procedure

(NOTE: At the beginning of the lesson, assign each student a partner. Within each pair of partners, assign one student the number 1 and the other student the number 2. On the board, list the materials that will be needed in class.)

1. Open your book to page 2.—Read the title.—There are certain things that you need to do before you come to class every day.
2. Find part A.—Read the paragraph.—How will these guidelines help you?—How will they help your classmates?—How will they help your teacher?—
3. Read guideline 1.—**Be prepared for class.**—To learn in each of your classes, you need to be prepared. Read the next line.—**Read assigned material.**—In many of your classes the teacher will assign textbook material to read. Why is it important to read this material before class?—(Answers will vary. Accept answers such as *so I can participate in discussions, so I will understand the lesson, so I can answer questions.*) Read the next line.—**Complete homework.**—Homework will be assigned in many classes to give you practice on important skills and to increase your knowledge. Why should you complete your homework before class?—(Answers will vary. Accept: *so I get needed practice, so I will get a better result.*)
4. Read guideline 2.—**Bring the materials you need.**—Teachers expect you to bring your materials to class every day. You can't do your best work without them. On the board is a list of materials you will need in this class. Read the list.—Write these materials under guideline 2.—If you didn't bring your materials to class, how would that affect you, the student?—How would that affect other students?—How would that affect your teacher?—